



USAID | AFGHANISTAN

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

ISSUANCE DATE: December 20, 2005

CLOSING DATE: January 19, 2006

Ladies/Gentlemen:

SUBJECT: Solicitation No. 306-05-39/OSSD for U.S. Personnel Service Contractor (USPSC) - Higher Education Advisor (**Re-advertisement**)

The United States Government, represented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), is seeking applications from qualified individuals interested in providing the PSC services as described in the attached solicitation.

Submission shall be in accordance with the attached information and applications should be submitted electronically to hrpsckabul@usaid.gov (attention to Seetha Chayapathi, Human Resources Specialist, Kabul/Afghanistan). This solicitation will remain open until January 19, 2006.

Any questions on this solicitation may be directed to Seetha Chayapathi, Human Resources Specialist, Phone (in Afghanistan) (202) 216-6288, Ext.4440 or e-mail at schayapathi@usaid.gov or Markus Dausses, Acting Executive Officer, Phone (in Afghanistan) (202) 216-6288, Ext. 4238 or e-mail at mdausse@usaid.gov. However, please do not send the applications to these e-mail addresses.

Sincerely,

Markus Dausses
Acting Executive Officer
USAID/Afghanistan

U.S. Agency for International Development
Great Massoud Road
Kabul
Afghanistan

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SOLICITATION NO. 306-05-39/OSSD

1. SOLICITATION NUMBER: 306-05-39/OSSD
2. ISSUING DATE: December 20, 2005
3. CLOSING DATE: January 19, 2006
4. POSITION TITLE: Higher Education Advisor
(Re-advertisement)
5. MARKETING VALUE: GS-13 (\$64,478 - \$83,819)
6. ORGANIZATIONAL LOCATION OF POSITION: Kabul - Afghanistan.
7. DIRECT SUPERVISOR: Senior Education Advisor,
USAID/Afghanistan.
8. SUPERVISORY CONTROL: The Higher Education Advisor will work under the general supervision and policy guidance of the Senior Education Advisor, USAID/Afghanistan. The GDO will review and approve the contractor's work plan and performance measures. Supervision will be generally confined to weekly staff meetings and informal daily and/or weekly consultations. The Higher Education Advisor is expected to work independently with limited guidance, to take initiative, to supervise direct professional staff and to lead higher education sector team activities.
9. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: The Personal Services Contract will be for 12 months, with possible extension.
10. SECURITY ACCESS: USG SECRET LEVEL.
11. AREA OF CONSIDERATION: U.S CITIZENS ONLY

POSITION DESCRIPTION: USAID HIGHER EDUCATIONAL ADVISOR

A. BACKGROUND

Afghanistan's educational system has been devastated by over two decades of war. An estimated 80% of all school buildings have been severely damaged or destroyed, including primary and secondary schools, teacher training colleges, vocational training institutes, and universities. Many trained teachers and university professors fled the country, took other jobs or were killed.

While considerable progress has been made in the past three years, the quality of university teaching is generally low, buildings are in poor condition, and furniture and equipment is lacking:

- Only 6% of the faculty in the 16 institutions have a PhD (or equivalent) degree. At Kabul University and Kabul Polytechnic Institute the situation is better (10% and 33%, respectively); at all other institutions, the situation is very poor (2%).
- Only 12% of the faculty is female.
- There are currently no private institutes of higher education.
- Many of the buildings in the universities are in very dilapidated condition. Some provincial institutions have virtually no physical infrastructure.
- There is almost no functioning scientific equipment.
- Libraries are poorly stocked, and many of the resources are in English or Russian, neither of which can be read by a majority of students.

The education portfolio includes the following initiatives:

- USAID's Accelerated Learning Program helps students in 17 provinces make up lost years of schooling. There are currently 170,228 students in Accelerated Learning Programs, of whom 58 percent are girls.
- Since 2002, USAID has funded the printing and distribution of 48 million textbooks. The books have been updated and "hate speech" from previous regimes removed. Sixteen million texts were distributed in 2004 and 6.2 million in 2005 to support the new curriculum in coordination with the Danish Development Agency.
- Teacher training through radio, launched in 2003 in three provinces, had expanded to all provinces in 2004. These programs are broadcast daily in Dari and Pashto. A February 2005 survey indicated that 83 percent of the country's teachers or 87,000 teachers listen to the broadcasts.

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- Separate from radio-based teacher training, USAID has conducted face to face teacher training for the AL program. As of the end of FY 2004, over 6,800 teachers had been trained in learner-centered teaching methods.
- In Fiscal Year (FY) 2005, USAID is building and rehabilitating 272 Afghan schools, as well as rebuilding two large Kabul high schools—Ghazi Boys' School, which will accommodate 6,200 students, and Karte Seh Girls' School, which will accommodate 5,000 students.
- The International School of Kabul (ISK) has enrolled 182 students and initiated the first year of classes in September 2005. After conducting an open competition, USAID is providing support for this private, independent, international school in Kabul that will focus on providing an American-style curriculum to Afghan students.
- USAID rehabilitated the Kabul Women's Dormitory to accommodate 1,100 mostly rural women who will attend university in Kabul; the first students arrived for the new academic year in March 2005.
- A USAID-funded U.S. university consortium, led by Southern Illinois University, is supporting technical assistance and training for Balkh University's Faculty of Agriculture.
- USAID and private donors are funding the establishment of the new American University of Afghanistan, a private, independent university with a projected enrollment of 1,100.
- Literacy is a crosscutting initiative linked to practical needs, to be expanded across all relevant USAID programs. USAID's accelerated health-focused Learning for Life program raises the level of women's literacy to qualify 5,500 women for further training as community health workers and midwives. The Literacy and Community Empowerment Program focuses literacy around economic self-reliance and grassroots democracy, with a particular emphasis on rural communities and women's development. In 200 villages, it will train almost 400 village teachers and 8,000 students, 65 percent of whom are female.
- The Women's Teacher Training Institute was established in Kabul in 2004. Under the Literacy and Community Empowerment Program, the Institute is developing materials and training literacy trainers and teachers. The Institute will increasingly become a central resource for government and agencies to access training, materials, and modern pedagogical approaches that support practical and sustainable literacy, numeracy, and life skills.

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- Based on its education strategy for 2005-2010, USAID is currently designing a program to promote access to quality basic, higher, and informal education for implementation in early FY 06.
- USAID and the Ministry of Education (MOE) have collaborated on school construction program in collaboration with local communities, which has completed 376 of 491 targeted facilities throughout Afghanistan despite challenging conditions, to include frequent security threats, poor transport to isolated rural communities and the constant need to strengthen the skills of local craftsmen, USAID and the MOE have targeted an additional 222 schools for renovation.

New initiatives being planned for the education sector include the following activities:

- Basic Education Project (\$75 M) - A 5 year project providing training for teachers, those who support teachers and capacity building for MOE.
- Community Based Education Project (\$24 M) - A 5 year project improving the quality and scope of community schools, teacher training and linkages of community schools to MOE
- Higher Education Project (\$40 M) - A 5 year project improving 16 faculties of education pre-service teacher, and support for ensuring sustained quality
- Literacy and Productive Skills Project (\$20 M) - A 5 year project to build capacity of private providers of development-focused literacy & vocational skills
- Capacity Building for Ministry of Women's Affairs (\$2.5 M) - A 2 year project to build capacities of Ministry of Women's Affairs in advocacy & policy development, programming & management of Women's Resource Centers
- APEP Extension (\$7.5M) - A 1 year extension of the Accelerated Learning program through December 31, 2006, to enable all currently enrolled students (170,000) to complete their course work.

B. Basic Function of the Position

The Higher Education Advisor will serve as the Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO) on higher education sector programs and projects being implemented by USAID contractors and grantees.

C. Duties and Responsibilities

1. Program/Project Development and Management Work 60%

Manage higher education projects being implemented by USAID contractors, entailing the coordination of efforts and the resolution of any conflicting and controversial issues with parties both within and outside the host government (specifically the Ministries of Education and Higher Education) and implementing partners. Responsible for the day to day management of the education program, focusing on development of a higher education program in Afghanistan, under Strategic Objective 3, and all of the actions related to implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the Mission's education sector portfolio. Maintains the data base related to the collection of information on program progress, objectives achieved and monies disbursed. Analyze and prioritize needs related to establishment of higher education programming in coordination with the Ministries of Education and Higher Education, relevant host country and international NGOs (INGOs), and other private sector entities. In coordination with the Mission Gender Advisor, devote special attention to the needs and opportunities for the education of girls and women. Determine current human and logistic capacity to satisfy higher education priorities; Analyze geographic, cultural and ethnic challenges to the formation of a sound higher education system; establish and /or integrate into a network key Afghan and international interlocutors in the higher education area; monitor current donor and institutional responses to all the above; and identify potential partners for program implementation. It is expected the contractor will regularly convey assessments and will collaborate with USAID/Afghanistan and USAID/Washington to make programming recommendations based on USAID's comparative advantages. Develop and apply necessary program methods, approaches, and extend, revise and adapt existing methodology to new and unusual situations, e.g. the higher education of young women, the application of educational technology, and capacity building of host country educational institutions and universities. The social, cultural, economic, governmental, political, and other characteristics of the programs/projects affect the administration and management of the programs to such a degree that significant program activities must be specifically designed and modified to accommodate them. Participate in higher education assessments. Present and defend positions, as required, before strategy reviews. Coordinate information and build consensus from various organizations involved in the preparation and approval of various documents. Advise the Social Sector General Development Officer on the implications of assessment conclusions, and on approved strategies for the design and implementation of ongoing and future higher education activities. Participate in review of Mission programs and project proposals which involve institutional policy issues, indicating strengths and weaknesses of proposals, and seek ways to improve institutional arrangements and structures in order to promote growth and development of higher education. Provide analyses of

the effectiveness of major policy reform and non-project assistance interventions and, as available, those of other development assistance agencies and International NGOs (INGO).

2. Technical Resource 40%

The Higher Education Advisor will work in concert with other Mission teams, advising on development assistance activities in the area of higher education programs. Coordinate with other donors, US Government and Afghan Government agencies working in the higher education sector as needed, through the Education Consultative Group or other mechanisms.

Serve as a resource to the Mission in the identification of critical issues and problems of higher education activities. Develop plans and programs for technical assistance, capital assistance, and other activities in the area of higher education; participate in determining country development objectives, based on cooperating country requests, perceived needs, U.S. policy, and determined priorities; recommends human and financial resources needed to meet program/project objectives; and manage higher education sector technical assistance activities. Represent Mission interests on matters related to the higher education sector at conferences, seminars, etc. Work with cooperating country regarding specific interests in the development of higher education programs, assist Afghanistan to evolve strategies appropriate to its individual circumstances, and coordinate and work jointly with other USG agencies, and with bilateral and multilateral donors involved with higher education sector activities.

Act as liaison with policy-level officials within ANE and EGAT Bureaus to ensure that the agency's views and interests are promoted with respect to current and emerging higher education policy issues, and that those views are taken into consideration in policy development and implementation. Deal with the myriad requests for information on higher education in Afghanistan and what USAID is doing. Perform other duties as assigned.

D. Supervision Received

The Higher Education Advisor will be supervised by and report to the Social Sector General Development Officer, USAID/Afghanistan.

E. Supervision/Oversight of Others

In carrying out specific assignments, the incumbent will consult and work closely with senior representatives from the Islamic State of Afghanistan, international donor organizations, local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and senior U.S. Government (USG) officials (USAID, and Department of State). The Higher Education Advisor under the leading of Senior Education Advisor is expected to work independently with limited guidance, to take initiative, to supervise

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direct professional staff and to lead higher education sector team activities.

F. POSITION ELEMENTS:

1. Knowledge required by the Position:

Mastery of higher education and training program principles, concepts, practices, methods, and techniques to apply new developments and theories to major problems not susceptible to treatment by accepted methods. Knowledge of USG, international, and host-government laws and regulations, documentation and training requirements, and lawmaking or rulemaking processes sufficient to make decisions or recommendations significantly changing, interpreting, or expanding important USAID/Afghanistan training policies and programs.

2. Supervisory Controls:

Social Sector General Development Officer sets the overall assignment objectives, program emphasis, and resources available. The Higher Education Advisor, having developed expertise in a particular program or functional area, has continuing responsibility for independently planning and carrying out important training programs or projects; determining the approach to be taken and the methods to be used; resolving most of the conflicts that arise; coordinating the work with others as necessary; and interpreting policy in terms of established objectives. The Higher Education Advisor keeps the Social Sector General Development Officer informed of progress, potentially controversial matters, and problems. Completed work is reviewed for conformance to overall requirements, compatibility with other work, and effectiveness in meeting objectives.

3. Guidelines:

Administrative policies and precedents, ADS Chapters, handbooks, ANE and EGAT Bureau directives, and higher education, training and technical references are usually applicable, but are stated in general terms. For example, operating guidance provides a broad overview of program goals and strategies as well as priorities, but does not detail how the identified program/project activities will be accomplished. The Higher Education Advisor uses initiative and resourcefulness in deviating from, refining, or extending traditional methods and practices, or in developing and recommending new or substantially modified methods, criteria, or policies.

4. Complexity:

The work includes a wide variety of duties requiring many different and unrelated processes and methods applied to a broad range of activities (e.g., planning and conducting/coordinating evaluations to identify and evaluate training programs/projects) or intensive

analysis and problem solving in a program or functional area. Decisions regarding what needs to be done depend on an assessment of very complex, diverse circumstances that involve major areas of uncertainty in approach, methodology, or interpretation resulting from such elements as continuing program changes, technological developments, new or unconventional methods, unique or controversial aspects of USAID activities, or conflicting interests or ideas (as between Mission or host-country requirements and recognized higher educational training practices). The work requires devising new methods and techniques to produce effective results or to implement advances in the state of the art; establishing criteria for administering or evaluating higher educational training programs; or developing policy guidance and procedural material for use by Mission, host-country, and/or NGO/Private Voluntary Organizations and INGO personnel.

5. Scope and Effect:

Purpose of the work is to plan and carry out a variety of important training programs or project activities. The work involves establishing criteria (e.g., developing guidance or procedures for major activities); formulating projects; assessing program effectiveness and maintaining the Mission's database for higher education related programs; investigating or analyzing a variety of unusual conditions or questions; or providing advisory or oversight services to Bureau or Mission personnel, host-country representatives, and others on specific functions or programs. Assignments typically involve training problems that are particularly difficult; or that are systemic in nature. The work directly influences the effectiveness and acceptability of total training programs/projects and/or training programs/projects affecting significant activities, or the operation of other USG agencies or host-government institutions.

6. Personal Contacts:

People who may be contacted include persons from outside USAID in a moderately unstructured setting. Typical of contacts at this level are those with persons in their capacities as subject matter specialists, training officials, contractors, attorneys, host-country officials (through the Consultative Group or other mechanisms), or representatives of other Federal agencies, professional organizations, donors, or organized or ad hoc groups. This level may also include contacts with high-level Agency or program officials, several managerial levels removed from the employee, when such contacts occur on an ad-hoc basis.

7. Purpose of Contacts:

Purpose of contacts is to influence, motivate, or persuade persons or groups who are typically skeptical, resistant, or uncooperative, and who must be approached skillfully to obtain the desired effect (e.g., negotiating milestones or timetables; influencing or persuading

NGOs/INGOs to agree to use new or improved technologies about which there may be conflicting opinions; representing the Mission, as a member of an institutional committee, on controversial topics; justifying the feasibility and desirability of plans or proposals that significantly affect NGO/INGOs or host-government practices, such as corrective action plans or co-funding requirements for programs/projects).

8. Physical Demands:

The work is primarily sedentary, although some physical effort may be required, e.g., walking, standing, carrying light items such as manuals or briefcases, or driving or traveling by motor vehicle or aircraft. Required overnight travel may be as high as 20% of the time.

9. Work Environment:

The work environment involves everyday risks or discomforts that require normal safety precautions typical of such places as offices, training rooms, and libraries. The work area is adequately lighted, heated, and ventilated. There is exposure to security risks and discomfort during program/project field visits conducted outside of Kabul, Afghanistan.

G. Selection Criteria:

Candidates will be evaluated and ranked based on the following selection criteria:

- 1. EDUCATOIN: (15 points):** Master's degree in area related to higher education development is required.
- 2. WORK EXPERIENCE: (25 points):** Minimum six years of progressively responsible experience in program/project management in area of higher education systems development with a proven track record of programmatic accomplishment and professional achievement. Experience must include program and activity management, strategic planning and analysis skills also international development experience is required.
- 3. LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS: (10 points):** Must be fluent in English and have proven ability to communicate quickly, clearly, and concisely, both orally and in writing, including technical reports.
- 4. KNOWLEDGE: (25 points):** Knowledge of US Govt. procedures and systems for strategic planning, results frameworks, activity design, program monitoring and evaluation required. Knowledge of political and social features of South Asia countries (these include Afghanistan, Pakistan,

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India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Maldives) and their higher educational system in particular is highly important.

- 5. SKILLS AND ABILITIES: (25 points):** Demonstrated strong analytical, managerial and writing skills are essential. Exceptional leadership, communications and interpersonal skills are absolutely critical. In addition, the incumbent must be able to interact effectively with a broad range of internal and external partners and clients, international organizations, and host country government officials or NGO counterparts. Must have demonstrated ability to produce professional quality analytical pieces. Must be able to make oral presentations logically and persuasively to senior host government officials, other donors, the NGO community, and to USAID and other USG officials.

Maximum Points Available: 100.

H. Term of Performance

The term of the contract will be for one year from on/about March 01, 2006 to on/about February 28, 2007 (unless otherwise agreed). Within 2 weeks after written notice from the Contracting Officer that all clearances have been received or, unless another date is specified by the Contracting Officer in writing, the incumbent shall proceed to Kabul to perform the above services which may be extended upon mutual agreement and subject to satisfactory performance and availability of funds. This position has been classified at a U.S. Government GS 13. The actual salary of the successful candidate will be negotiated depending on qualifications and previous salary history. In addition, the Mission has a 25% Post Differential allowance, 25% Danger Pay and FICA and federal income tax will be withheld by USAID. Afghanistan is a no-dependent post.

I. General information regarding living and working conditions in Afghanistan

Life in Afghanistan has somewhat improved since the establishment of the government, and great strides have been made to regularize the availability of services, utilities, and supplies of common consumer items. Living conditions, however, are still difficult but this is an historical opportunity to work closely with a dedicated team to assist the Afghans to bring about peace and stability to their war-torn country. Afghanistan is an unaccompanied post. All staff will be housed on the heavily guarded and fortified Embassy compound in newly installed modular units or at the Cafe Compound.

J. Medical and Security Clearance

The selected applicant must be able to obtain a USG secret level security clearance and a Department of State Class I medical clearance.

K. Benefits:

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As a matter of policy, and as appropriate, a PSC is normally authorized the benefits and allowances listed in this section. [NOTE: A contractor meeting the definition of a U.S. Resident Hire PSC, shall be subject to U.S. Federal Income Tax, but shall not be eligible for any fringe benefits (except contributions for FICA, health insurance, and life insurance), including differentials and allowances.]

A. BENEFITS:

- o FICA Contribution
- o Contribution toward Health & life insurance
- o Pay Comparability Adjustment
- o Eligibility for Worker's Compensation
- o Annual & Sick Leave
- o Access to Embassy medical facilities, commissary and pouch mail service as per post policy

B. ALLOWANCES (If Applicable):

- (1) Temporary Lodging Allowance (Section 120)
- (2) Living Quarters Allowance (Section 130)
- (3) Post Allowance (Section 220)
- (4) Supplemental Post Allowance (Section 230)
- (5) Post Differential (Chapter 500)
- (6) Payments during Evacuation/Authorized Departure (Section 600) and
- (7) Danger Pay (Section 650)
- (8) Education Allowance (Section 270)
- (9) Separate Maintenance Allowance (Section 260)
- (10) Education Travel (Section 280)

* Standardized Regulations (Government Civilians Foreign Areas).

C. FEDERAL TAXES: PSCs are not exempt from payment of Federal Income taxes under the foreign earned income exclusion.

I. CONTRACT INFORMATION BULLETINS (CIBs) PERTAINING TO PSCs

- 99-9 Personal Services Contracting (PSC) Annual Health
- 99-7 Contractual Coverage for Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC) Services
- 98-25 Defense Base Act (DBA) Coverage and DBA Waiver List
- 98-24 Use of Compensatory (Comp) Time by PSCs
- 98-23 Guidance Regarding Classified Contract Security and Contractor Personnel Security Requirements
- 98-16 Annual Salary Increase for USPSCs
- 98-14 Change in Required Application Form for USPSCs
- 98-10 Personal Services Contracts (PSCs) Annual Health Insurance Costs
- 98-3 Class Deviation to 31.205-6(g)(3), Foreign National Severance Pay Under Professional Services Contracts
- 97-16 Class Justification for Use of Other Than Full & Open Competition for Personal Services Contracts with U.S. Citizens Contracted with

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- Locally with CCNs and TCNs Subject to the Local Compensation Plan,
and for Overseas Contracts of \$250,000 or Less
- 97-11 (Corrected) 1997 FICA & Medicare Tax Rates for Personal Services Contracts
 - 97-3 New USAID Contractor Employee Physical Examination
 - 96-23 Unauthorized Provision in Personal Services Contract
 - 96-19 U. S. Personal Services Contract (USPSC) - Leave
 - 96-8 Determining a Market Value for PSCs Hired Under Appendix D, Handbook 14
 - 94-9 Sunday Pay for U.S. Personal Services Contractors (PSCs)
 - 93-17 Financial Disclosure Requirements Under a Personal Services Contract (PSC)

M. LIST OF REQUIRED FORMS FOR PSCs

For initial consideration:

1.OF-612, signed (electronic version required).

Upon advice by the Contracting Officer that the applicant is the successful candidate:

- 2.Contractor Employee Biographical Data Sheet (AID 1420-17)
- 3.Contractor Physical Examination (AID Form 1420-62).
- 4.Questionnaire for Sensitive Positions (for National Security) (SF-86)
- 5.Finger Print Card (FD-258). ** (Available from the law enforcement offices or in USAID/Washington).

N. APPLYING

Qualified individuals are requested to submit a U.S government OF-612 which is available at the USAID website
<http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/forms.asp>, or at Federal Offices. Applicant's CVs may also be included as an attachment.

All applications should be submitted electronically to:

Attention: Seetha Chayapathi
Human Resources Specialist
USAID/Afghanistan
hrpsckabul@usaid.gov

To Ensure consideration of applications for the intended position, please reference the solicitation number on your application and as the subject line of cover letter. The highest ranking applications may be selected for and interview. Applications may submit an applications against this solicitation at any time but prior to January 19, 2006, unless revised.

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List of Required PSC forms outlined below can be found at:

[http://www.usaid.gov/procurement bus opp/procurement/psc solicit/forms.html](http://www.usaid.gov/procurement%20bus%20opp/procurement/psc%20solicit/forms.html).

1. OF-612
2. Contractor Physical Examination (AID Form 1420-62)
3. Questionnaire for Sensitive Positions (for National Security) SF-86, or
4. Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions (SF-85)
5. Finger Print Card (FD-258). Standardized regulations (government civilians foreign areas)

Forms 2 through 5 shall be completed only upon the advice of the Contracting Officer that an applicant is the successful candidate for the job. Note: The selected individual must be able to obtain a security and medical clearance.

Various Contract Information Bulletins (CIBs) and Acquisition and Assistance Policy Directives (AAPDs) pertain to Personal Services Contracts. Those documents can be found at:

[http://www.usaid.gov/procurement bus opp/procurement/cib/subject.html#psc](http://www.usaid.gov/procurement%20bus%20opp/procurement/cib/subject.html#psc)

Additionally, AIDAR Appendixes D or J also applies to PSCs, which can be found at:

<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/aidar.pdf>

Point of Contact

Seetha Chayapathi, Human Resources Specialist, Phone (in Afghanistan) - (202) 216-6288 Ext. 4440; Fax (202) 216-6288 (Ext. 105) Email: schayapathi@usaid.gov or Markus Dausses, Acting Executive Officer, Phone (in Afghanistan) (202) 216-6288, Ext. 4238 or e-mail at mdausses@usaid.gov.

Place of Performance

Address: USAID/Afghanistan
US. Embassy
Great Masoud Road
Kabul, Afghanistan